

**Exhibitor's Handbook  
For Guidelines Governing  
North American Dog Agility Council  
Sanctioned Trials**



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**[www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com)**

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## **Mission Statement**

NADAC supports agility as a competitive sport, while striving to protect and advance the interests of dog agility by encouraging sportsmanlike competition and responsible dog ownership. We set forth and govern the guidelines that support the concept of fun, while maintaining a competitive and safe agility arena.

NADAC encourages and trains judges to set courses that are fast and flowing. Courses are traditionally fun and fast due to the flow and distance between obstacles. Our goal is to maintain an environment that tests dog and handler teams with appropriate challenges, while combining speed, accuracy, distance, and teamwork.

## **Related Documents**

In addition to this Handbook, exhibitors may find additional rules and useful information in these other NADAC documents:

[NADAC Titles](#)

[Judges Addendum](#)

[Trial Chairperson/Trial Secretary's Handbook](#)

These documents and answer to frequently-asked questions (FAQs) can be found on the NADAC website at <http://www.nadac.com>, or by following the above links.

# Guidelines for NADAC Trials

## Purpose of Agility Trials

The purpose of a NADAC agility trial is to demonstrate the ability of the dog and its handler to work as a smooth functioning team. The dog should be under control at all times and show a willingness to work with the handler. Handlers should always conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike fashion.

## Eligibility for Entry

All healthy, trained dogs over eighteen (18) months of age are eligible to compete in NADAC agility trials. There is no leeway in the dog's age, even by one day; the dog **MUST** be a minimum of eighteen months old on the day of the trial in which the dog is to compete.

Dogs must be registered with NADAC prior to competing in a NADAC sanctioned trial.

Bitches in heat, lame, or blind dogs are ineligible for entry, as is any dog with a deformity that may cause a judge to not be able to reasonably assess the dog's ability to function and perform agility obstacles safely, and in a manner that is in the best interest, health and welfare of the dog.

Any dog that demonstrates aggression towards any person or any dog, whether inside or outside the ring, must be excused from the agility trial.

Any dog that the judge feels is not in enough control to perform all obstacles in a safe manner will be excused from the agility trial.

All NADAC agility trials shall be open to purebred and mixed breed dogs.

**Any dog that has not previously entered a NADAC trial must begin all classes at the Novice level.** A dog that runs a class at a level higher than they are eligible for will not receive credit for points earned at that level. Points earned at a higher level of a class, prior to the completion of the lower level title, will not be added to the dogs point history.

All dogs must be registered with NADAC in order to compete in sanctioned events.

A dog registration is a one-time process and the number assigned is permanent.

## Agility Obstacles

The following obstacles are allowed at NADAC agility trials:

Dog Walk  
Open tunnel  
Hoops

Weave poles  
Non-winged jumps  
Gates (2009)

A-frame  
Winged jumps  
Tire Jump

## **Becoming an Associate**

You can become a NADAC Associate by filling out and sending in the application form found on the NADAC website at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com). The fee is \$15.00, which is renewable on January 1st each year; multi-year membership is also available at a discount.

Benefits to becoming an Associate are:

- a. You may register any new dog at a reduced fee.
- b. You may request a height card for dogs that you compete with at no charge, after having three judges sign the dog's height form. The normal fee is \$10.00 per card.
- c. Any dog registration card, Associate membership card, or height card that is lost or stolen will be replaced at no charge. The normal replacement fee is \$5.00 per card.
- d. Associates will have certificates and printed at no charge. There is a \$5.00 fee for non-associates after February 1, 2008.
- e. Hard copies of the Exhibitors Handbook will be mailed to Associates free of charge upon request. The Exhibitor's Handbook is \$5.00 to non-Associates.
- f. Associates will have access to the on-line NADAC Newsletter, beginning January 1, 2008. Exhibitors are not required to become NADAC Associates in order to compete in sanctioned events or to register their dogs with NADAC.

## Jump Heights

Dogs entered in the Proficient Category must jump at the minimum jump height specified by the following table. Dogs entering the Skilled Category MUST jump one jump height lower than the heights listed in the table, although no dog shall jump lower than 4". All dogs must jump their valid jump height as determined by their Category and Division and may not jump higher.

	Small Dogs		Medium Dogs	Large Dogs	
Standard Division	Withers 11" & under jump 8"	Withers 14" & under jump 12"	Withers 18" & under jump 16"	Withers 20" & under jump 20"	Withers over 20" are in the 20+ class & jump 20"
Junior Handler Division	Withers 11" & under jump 4"	Withers 14" & under jump 8"	Withers 18" & under jump 12"	Withers over 18" jump 16" (may NOT jump higher in this division)	
Veterans Division	Withers 11" & under jump 4"	Withers 14" & under jump 8"	Withers 18" & under jump 12"	Withers over 18" jump 16" (may NOT jump higher in this division)	

As the table shows, there are five Standard Division-Proficient jump heights: 8", 12", 16", 20", 20+. There are four Standard Division-Skilled jump heights: 4", 8", 12", and 16". There are four jump heights for the Veterans and Junior Handler divisions: 4", 8", 12", and 16".

Veterans and Junior Handler dogs must jump their valid jump height and may not jump higher; thus, a Vets or JH dog may not jump higher than 16" in the Proficient category and no higher than 12" in the Skilled category.

There is no 4" Standard Division jump height in Proficient; the 4" Proficient height is for veteran dogs/handlers, disabled handlers, and junior handlers only. In the Skilled category, 8" dogs may jump 4" as their standard jump height. No dog may jump lower than 4".

## Jump Height Exemptions

Dogs in the following list of breeds may jump 4" lower than they would normally jump as determined by their measurement. The "breed exemption" jump height becomes their accepted Standard division jump height. For example, if a Corgi were to measure into the 12" jump height group, they are allowed to enter the 8" Standard division jump height group. However, the breed exemption may NOT be used to enter a dog at the 4" height unless they are entered in the Veterans or JH divisions or the Skilled category.

Am. Staffordshire Terrier	Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	Petite Basset Griffon Vendéen
Australian Terrier	Clumber Spaniel	Pug
Basset Hound	Dachshund	Scottish Terrier
Bulldog	French Bulldog	Staffordshire Bull Terrier
Bull Terrier	Glen of Imaal Terrier	Swedish Valhund
Cairn Terrier	Miniature Bull Terrier	West Highland White Terrier
Cardigan Welsh Corgi	Pembroke Welsh Corgi	

It is believed that, at all times, handlers will enter their dogs at the appropriate heights, using sound ethics and good sportsmanship. This height exception is for the health and well-being of the dog, not to give one dog a competitive edge over another dog. NADAC assumes that any handler who enters a dog at a lower height has done so to maintain the longevity and good health of their canine companion.

## **Measuring**

All dogs entered in the Proficient category, Standard Division for Novice, Open or Elite jumping 4", 8", 12" or 16" are required to be measured. Dogs jumping 20" or 20+ are not required to be measured, nor are Veteran or JH dogs that jump 16", nor are Skilled category dogs at any jump height. An exhibitor may request to have their dog measured to determine if the dog should be entered in 20" or 20+, but no height card will be issued for any dog jumping 20" or 20+.

Dogs with permanent height cards need not be measured.

## **Determining a Dog's Jump Height**

The height of a dog is the measurement of a perpendicular line from a flat surface on the ground to the top of the dog's withers, which is the highest point of the dog's shoulders. This point is at the top of the shoulders where the neck appears to meet the shoulders. When performing the measurement, the dog's legs should be directly underneath and the dog should not be leaning forward or backward. The dog's head should be in a natural state and not be lowered downward. Wickets are the official measuring device used by NADAC. No other type of measuring device shall be used for measuring at a NADAC trial.

The host club/group may appoint a qualified person to measure dogs. However, should a measurement be within one half (1/2) inch or less below the maximum shoulder height of a jump height group, the judge of record or official measuring judge for the trial is required to measure that particular dog. Any exhibitor whose dog measures up to a higher jump height group when measured by a steward may request that the judge re-measure their dog.

Judges under supervision are not approved as measuring judges. All other judges on the NADAC Judge's List are approved to measure for permanent height cards.

A dog may have to move up to a higher jump height after the measure-in process. An exhibitor may choose to jump at the lower height and run as an FEO entry. Club/groups are not required to move the dog to a lower height than the height marked on the entry form.

The decision of the judge or supervising judge shall be final.

A judge may choose to measure a dog at that trial regardless of whether or not that dog has a measurement card. The judge may change the jumping height that the dog competes in for that trial if the judge deems that the dog should be in a different height group than that which he was entered in. If a judge places a dog with a height card into a different jump height group, then a report must be made to the NADAC office notifying them of the move up in jump height.

## **Permanent Measurement Cards**

An application for a Permanent Height Card can be downloaded from the NADAC web site. As a courtesy to exhibitors, clubs may provide copies of the form. Three measurements, from three different judges at three separate weekend trials, are required. An exception to this may be taken by the judge if the judge feels that the dog is clearly "WAY UNDER" the wicket (at least one finger must easily fit between the dog's withers and the wicket). The judge may then sign the sheet "WAY UNDER" and sign their name to that statement.

Dogs must be a minimum of 2 years old at the time of measurement to be eligible for permanent height card. Once they have received a permanent height card, dogs need not be measured again. Dog's that measure over 18" at the withers, and dogs entered in the Skilled category at any jump height, do not need to be measured and do not need height measurement cards.

There is a \$10.00 fee to receive a permanent height card, which covers processing, printing and mailing costs. Height cards are issued to NADAC Associates at no cost.

## **Levels, Divisions, Categories, and Classes**

The three levels offered are **Novice, Open, and Elite.**

The three divisions offered are **Standard, Veterans, and Junior Handlers.**

The two categories offered are **Skilled and Proficient.**

The certification classes are Regular Agility, Jumpers, Tunnelers, Weavers, Touch N Go, Chances, Hoopers and Gaters.

### **Levels**

The **Novice level** is the entry level for every class. The Novice level is for any dog which has not yet earned any NADAC certification in a particular class.

The **Open level** is the second level for every class. A Novice title must be earned before entry is allowed at the Open level.

The **Elite level** is the third and most advanced level for every class. A Novice level title and an Open level title must be earned before entry is allowed at the Elite level.

Clubs are not required to allow move-ups during a multiple day trial, and are encouraged to not allow move-ups. Dogs shall not move up to a new level between rounds on the same day. A handler is never required to move a dog up to a higher level of competition after a title is completed.

If a dog is prematurely moved to a higher level in a class before completing the requirements for the lower level title in that class, the dog must go back to the lower level to complete the requirements for that level title before any higher level titles will be awarded. Any points earned at the higher level prior to the completion of the lower level title will be lost. This rule applies to the certification title, which in each class requires 30 points, and not to the Outstanding and Superior titles. Thus a dog may move to Open Jumpers and earn points and titles once the Novice Jumpers title has been earned; the Outstanding Open Jumpers title, however, does not require the Outstanding Novice Jumpers title, and so forth.

A dog may also be moved back down to a lower level in order to complete Outstanding and Superior titles or simply because the exhibitor wishes to run their dog at a lower level. Points and titles earned at the lower level are valid for special awards.

## **Divisions**

**Standard Division.** The Standard Division is open to all dogs.

**Veterans Division - Jumping Classes.** The Veterans division in the jumping classes--Regular Agility, Jumpers, and Chances--is open to any dog age seven (7) or older. The dog's age shall be determined by the dog's actual birthday, or the closest date, as known. Dogs in this division are given the allocated Veterans course time, and are placed separately from the other divisions. Dogs may also enter this division if the handler enters the trial as a **Veteran or Disabled Handler** (see below).

**Veterans Division - Non-jumping Classes.** The Veterans division in the non-jumping classes--Touch N Go, Tunnelers, Hoopers, and Weavers--is open **only** to Veteran/Disabled handlers. The Veteran/Disabled handler time allowance is to give additional time to handlers because of their age or mobility limitations. Dogs in this division are given the allocated Veterans standard course time, but are placed with the other dogs in the Standard division jump height.

**Veteran or Disabled Handler.** This applies to any handler age 60 or older, or any handler who has a certificate of disability. The handler's age shall be determined by any piece of identification with their birth date listed. Handlers with a disability shall present a copy of their disabled parking permit or a letter from their doctor. If a handler wishes to enter any class as a disabled handler, then they must enter all classes and all dogs that they compete with for that weekend as a disabled handler. [They may not enter particular classes or a particular dog using the Veteran/Disabled handler status while entering a different dog or different classes in the other divisions.](#)

**Junior Handler Division.** The Junior Handler division is open to any dog which is being handled by a handler who is 17 years of age or younger. This division applies only to the jumping classes--Regular Agility, Jumpers, and Chances. There is no Junior Handler Division in the non-jumping classes. Dogs in this division are given the allocated Junior Handler standard course time, and are placed separately from the other divisions.

## Categories

Each class will be split into two categories, Proficient and Skilled. A dog may only be entered in ONE category per weekend. The dog must be entered in all Proficient or all Skilled categories for all classes entered on a particular weekend.

In the **Proficient Category**, dogs must jump their measured jump height per the current jump height table. Runs must be clean, with no course faults or time faults, in order to qualify.

In the **Skilled Category**, exhibitors MUST jump their dog one jump height lower than they are required to jump in the Proficient Category. For example, a dog who measures to jump 20" or 20+ in the Standard division, Proficient category, must jump 16" in the Standard division, Skilled category and will receive the benefit of the additional time allotted to the 16" dogs. If this same dog is also a Veteran, or is handled by a Veteran/Disabled Handler or Junior Handler, he may enter the Veteran or JH Division and jump another 4" lower. This dog would receive the time allotted to the 16" Vets jumping 12".

Runs in Skilled must be clean, with no course faults or time faults, in order to qualify. However, in Regular Agility the run may receive a 5-point qualifier if the total number of faults (time- or course-faults) are 5 or fewer.

Courses are the same for both categories. When entering a trial, you must indicate what category you are entering for that weekend. You may go back and forth from trial to trial, but not on the same weekend.

Elite-Proficient titles, the NATCH and Versatility NATCH awards, and all Elite-level special award plaques are earned in the Proficient category. Elite-Skilled titles, the MEDAL and Versatility MEDAL awards, and all Elite-Skilled Special awards are earned in the Skilled category. At the Open and Novice levels, points from the two categories are combined for titling purposes, and no distinction between the two categories is made. Also, Elite-level runs that qualify for the Platinum Speed Star and Purple Achievement Awards are combined for the two Categories; see the **Titles and Awards** section for more details.

## Classes

NADAC offers titling opportunities in the following classes.

**Regular Agility Class** The Regular Agility class is a numbered course that may consist of all obstacles allowed on the NADAC equipment list. Judges may choose to use some or all of the acceptable obstacles on a course.

**At the Novice level**, the main goal is to test the dog's ability to perform the obstacles safely. The dog is asked to perform the obstacles at a moderate pace and at a moderate distance.

**At the Open level**, the goal is to test the handler and dog's ability to perform the obstacles at a faster pace, while performing the obstacles with more directional and distance control and exhibit obstacle discrimination. The course design should encourage handlers to work the dog from both sides comfortably.

**At the Elite level**, more complex handler strategies are tested, with the dog moving at a brisk pace. The dog should work off both sides of the handler, be able to discriminate between obstacles and freely move away from the handler while performing the obstacles with greater distance and directional control.

The dog may be entered in the Standard, Veterans, or the Junior Handlers division. A dog may be entered in only ONE division and only ONE level per Regular Agility class.

In the Veterans and Junior Handler divisions, the dog shall be given their allotted standard course time and the dog must jump their valid Veterans or Junior Handler jump height.

A dog will earn 10 qualifying points in the Proficient or Skilled category if the run is a clean, non-faulted run, (no course faults and no time faults). In the Skilled category, if the dog completes their run with a total of 5 (five) or fewer faults (course faults or time faults), the dog shall earn 5 points.

Certification in the Regular Agility Classes requires a total of 30 points.

**Jumpers Class** The Jumpers class is a numbered course that consists of jumps and 1-2 tunnels.

The goal of the Jumpers class is to demonstrate the ability of the handler and dog to work as a fast-moving, smooth functioning team.

This class highlights the natural jumping ability of the dog and tests the handler for effective handling styles, while moving at a rapid pace. The dog may be entered in the Standard, Veterans, or the Junior Handler Division.

In the Veterans and Junior Handler Divisions, the dog shall be given their allotted standard course time and the dog must jump their valid veteran or Junior Handler jump height.

A dog may be entered in only ONE division and only ONE level per class.

For a clean, non-faulted run under the Standard Course time, the dog shall earn 10 points.

Certification in the Jumpers Classes requires 30 points.

**Tunnelers Class** The Tunnelers class is a numbered course comprised of only tunnels.

The goal of the Tunnelers class is to demonstrate the dog's ability to respond quickly to directional commands from the handler while negotiating a course comprised of only tunnels.

This class is open to Standard Division dogs and dogs entered for a Veteran/Disabled Handler; in the latter case, the Veteran entry rules for Non-jumping classes apply.

For a clean, non-faulted run under the appropriate Standard Course time, the dog shall earn 10 points.

Certification in the Tunnelers Class requires 30 points.

**Weavers Class** The Weavers class is a numbered course comprised of tunnels, hoops, and weave poles.

The goal of the Weavers class is to demonstrate the dog's ability to correctly enter weave poles at a variety of angles and at greater speeds than required in the Regular Agility class.

**At the Novice Level**, dogs will be tested on three short sets of weave poles.

**At the Open Level**, dogs will be tested on three sets of weave poles: one long set and two short set of poles.

**At the Elite Level**, dogs will be tested on three sets of long weave poles.

This class is open to Standard Division dogs and dogs entered for a Veteran/Disabled Handler; in the latter case, the Veteran entry rules for Non-jumping classes apply.

For a clean, non-faulted run under the appropriate Standard Course time, the dog shall earn 10 points.

Certification in the Weavers Class requires 30 points.

**Touch N Go Class** The Touch N Go class is a numbered course comprised of contact obstacles, tunnels and hoops.

The goal of the Touch N Go class is to demonstrate the dog's ability to perform contact obstacles correctly on a course comprised of tunnels, hoops and contact obstacles.

Typically, there shall be three to four contact performances in the class.

Touch N Go is offered in the Standard division for all levels. This class is open to Standard Division dogs and dogs entered for a Veteran/Disabled Handler; in the latter case, the Veteran entry rules for Non-jumping classes apply.

For a clean, non-faulted run under the appropriate Standard Course time, the dog shall earn 10 points.

Certification in the Touch N Go Class requires 30 points.

**Chances Class** The Chances class is a numbered course that could have any of the acceptable obstacles listed in the NADAC equipment list.

The goal of the Chances class is to test the distance, directional and discrimination (DD&D) skills of the dog and handler team. The Chances course shall consist of a numbered sequence of 10-15 obstacles. In addition, the course shall include distance tests, discrimination tests, and directional tests. At each level the tests will include more difficult sequences as the dogs progress through the Novice, Open and Elite levels.

At the Elite level, distance tests shall be set at a **minimum** of 20 feet . At the Open level, distance tests shall be set at a **minimum** of 15 feet. At the Novice level, distance tests shall be set at a **minimum** of 10 feet.

On each course, the dog and handler team shall have 40 seconds to complete the course. All obstacles on the entire course must be performed cleanly (no faults) for a qualifying score. Once the dog has been sent across the line to perform one of the required tests, they will be faulted if they return back across the line with all four paws before the completion of that test. Likewise, the handler will be faulted if they touch or cross the line while the dog is performing a required test.

There shall be no more than one performance of a set of weave poles during the course, and it is possible that there will be courses with no weave pole performances.

The dog may be alongside the handler during the performance of any obstacles that are not designated as part of a test sequence and therefore not marked by lines on the ground.

The dog may be entered in the Standard, Veterans, or the Junior Handlers Divisions. In the Veterans and Junior Handler Divisions, the dog must jump their valid veteran or junior handler jump height.

A dog may be entered in only ONE division and only ONE level per class. This class is being offered as a Pass/Fail class, with no class placements.

Certification in the Chances Class requires 30 points.

### **Gaters Class (not offered until 2009)**

Rules and definitions for this class will be released prior to the class being offered.

**Hoopers Class** The Hoopers class is a course as designed by the handler to demonstrate the dog's ability to follow directional tests upon the direction of the handler.

The goal of Hoopers is to demonstrate the team's ability to handle and communicate effectively while the dog runs through a course consisting entirely of hoops. This class is open to Standard Division dogs and dogs entered for a Veteran/Disabled Handler; in the latter case, the Veteran entry rules for Non-jumping classes apply.

In each Hoopers course, there will be a bonus sequence that can be attempted at a distance for bonus points in the class.

The Hoopers obstacles are divided between "non-test" hoops and "test" hoops.

The non-test hoops will be in a line of four hoops placed on the side or middle of the ring. At all levels, the first test must be preceded by a minimum of three non-test hoops in any direction. If the dog goes through a test hoop while attempting to do the three non-test hoops, the non-test hoop count sets back to zero. After the dog successfully does the three non-test hoops followed by a successful test, then they must perform at least TWO non-test hoops and then perform their second test. At the Open and Elite levels, the dogs will then perform ONE non-test hoop and then a third test.

At the Novice level the sequence will be three non-test hoops, then a test, then TWO non-test hoops, then a second test and then across the finish line.

At the Open and Elite levels the dogs will do "three" non-test hoops, then a test, then "two" non-test hoops, then a test, then "one" non-test hoop, then their final test and across the finish line.

If the test can be described by a "pattern" – pinwheel, serpentine, etc. – the test will not be numbered and may be attempted in either direction. If the test cannot be described by a pattern, the test will be numbered and must be taken in the indicated order.

If a test is faulted by a dog going off-course or bypassing a hoop with all four paws, the team can re-start the test without having to perform additional non-test hoops. The test can be attempted in a different direction, as long as it is the same test (see "pattern" described above). All tests (including bonus tests) may be re-attempted. A team can attempt a test up to three times. For purposes of counting attempts, a test does not start until the dog passes through the first hoop with four paws. If a team gives up on a test or is unsuccessful after three tries, then the non-test hoops must be performed in order to attempt another test. The team may not re-attempt a test once they return to the non-test hoops.

At the Novice level the dog must complete two test sequences correctly within the allowed time.

At the Open level the dog must complete three test sequences correctly within the allowed time.

At the Elite level the dog must compete three test sequences correctly within the allowed time. One of the three tests must be a bonus test pattern. That test is not required to be done at a distance, but the pattern must be completed correctly.

A qualifying run, without bonus, will be worth 10 points. At any level, if a team successfully performs a bonus test with the handler behind the bonus line, they will earn a 15-point qualifying round. For Elite, if the team successfully performs both bonus tests with the handler behind the line, the result will be a 20-point qualifying round.

Certification in the Hoopers Class requires 30 points.

## Bonus Point Rounds

From time to time, the judge may choose to add a Bonus challenge to any course. This can be added in any course. Furthermore, the obstacles that constitute the Bonus challenge must be completed “in flow”, without the dog spinning or turning unnecessarily, or running widely out of the path of the course, or the handler re-directing the dog from a wrong obstacle to the correct one. Final determination of whether or not the challenge was completed “in flow” is up to the judge.

The Bonus is entirely OPTIONAL; qualification in the class does NOT depend on the team successfully handling the challenge!

The bonus options, as defined by the judge, can be valued as a 20 point bonus option, or a fifteen point bonus option, depending upon the difficulty factor. The 15 point bonus option may be available at all three levels, whereas the 20 point bonus option, if available, is only offered at the Elite level. At the Elite level, a course might not have any bonus options, or only a 20 point option, or maybe only a 15 point option, or the course might have both a 15 point option and a 20 point option. At the Novice or Open levels a course might or might not have a 15 point bonus option available on the course, depending on the course design.

If the team manages a clean non-faulted round in the class, and successfully completes the Bonus challenge, the dog will earn either fifteen (15) points or twenty (20) points in that class instead of the usual ten (10) points. Note that the run must be a qualifying run in order to be eligible for the bonus.

## Run Index

Commencing January 1, 2006, NADAC began computing a “run index” for each un-faulted run at the Elite level in each class except Chances. The Run Index tells each competitor how their dog performed in that class when compared to the average performance of all the other dogs in that class and jump height over the past year. Runs that are fast and efficient will have higher run index (RI) scores than otherwise. The RI is only computed for Elite level classes.

RI does not have any effect on whether the run was a qualifier or not, nor does it affect the number of points the dog earns for qualifying in that class. Instead, RI will be used to determine a bonus for the truly outstanding runs when computing the annual Top Ten awards. Runs with an RI of over 100 will be worth fifteen (15) points instead of ten when computing the dog’s Top Ten points in that class—see **Titles and Awards**, below. This in no way affects the number of qualifying points required in order to title in the class; two clean runs with an RI greater than 100 are not enough to earn a class certificate.

Qualifying runs with a 100+ RI also count towards the Platinum Speed Star and Platinum Versatility Speed Star. If the run also included a successfully-completed Bonus challenge, it also counts towards the Purple Achievement Cup/Silver Achievement Cup, Purple Versatility Achievement Cup/Silver Versatility Achievement, and MOD SQUAD Awards.

RI may also be used in the future to help in determining a team’s qualification for entry to future NADAC Championships.

## Points and Transfers

As described above, dogs earn points through qualifying runs in the NADAC classes. Dogs earn:

Ten (10) points for each qualifying run;

Five (5) points for a **Regular** run with five or fewer faults (**Skilled** category only);

Fifteen (15) points for a qualifying run with a successfully completed 15 point Bonus Challenge.

Twenty (20) points for a qualifying run with a successfully completed 20 point Bonus Challenge.

Points earned are class, division, category, and level specific. Thus they determine the titles and awards that the dog is eligible to receive. Points are also used to determine a dog's eligibility to enter the NADAC Championships, and in which division and class they may enter. See the event premium at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com) for details.

Exhibitors may check the status of the points their dogs have earned by checking the results of each trial in the files section of the [NADACagility@yahoogroups.com](mailto:NADACagility@yahoogroups.com) list, which are usually posted within two weeks after receiving them from the show. The trial results will remain on the list for at least thirty (30) days. An exhibitor may also look up the dog's complete points history via the NADAC website at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com). There may be some delay in the merging of the trial results into the complete points history, however, so exhibitors are encouraged to consult both sources of information and maintain their own points records. NADAC can also be contacted if any questions remain.

In some cases, exhibitors are permitted to transfer a dog's points from one type to another in order to earn a title or award. Those transfers are subject to limitations intended to make sure the transfers are fair to all competitors. Those limitations are discussed below.

**Divisions.** Exhibitors no longer need to transfer points between divisions. Effective December 10, 2005, NADAC began automatically combining points in the three different divisions—Standard, Veteran, and Junior Handlers—for the purpose of calculating titles and awards in the various classes for each dog. This includes points earned prior to December 10, 2005. Titles no longer include the suffixes 'V' or 'JH'. NATCH awards no longer include the V- or JH-designation.

**Levels.** Points ordinarily apply only to the titles and awards appropriate to that particular level. However, at the request of the exhibitor, higher level points can be used to complete lower level Outstanding and Superior titles for the purposes of earning Special Awards.

Transfers are obtained by contacting NADAC directly via [nadacsharon@aol.com](mailto:nadacsharon@aol.com). Points will not be transferred until they are earned—requests in advance will not be honored. Please allow sufficient time for your records to be updated from the show results before requesting a transfer of any points you believe your dog has earned. **All points transfer requests will be made subject to the approval of NADAC.**

**Categories.** Points earned in the Proficient and Skilled categories are combined at the Novice and Open levels, and therefore do not need to be transferred. At the Elite level, Proficient Category points (which include all Elite points earned prior to the introduction of the Skilled category on January 1, 2006) are credited towards Proficient titles and awards, and points earned in the Skilled category are credited towards Skilled category titles and awards. At the request of the exhibitor, NADAC will transfer points from the Proficient category to the Skilled category at the Elite level. Points can never be transferred from Skilled to Proficient.

**Classes.** Points cannot be transferred between classes.

## Titles and Awards

For each NADAC class and level in both the Proficient and Skilled categories, NADAC offers certificates that acknowledge the achievement of the basic title in that class/level, as well as Outstanding and Superior titles that show advanced performance. Each title has specific points requirements—see the *NADAC Titles* list at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com) for more details. Titles can be printed out directly by exhibitors from the website; alternatively, associates may send a request to NADAC to print out a laminated title certificate.

In addition to the titles, NADAC offers special awards and certificates that acknowledge higher levels of performance across multiple classes and levels:

The **Versatility** award acknowledges teams that successfully complete the title requirements (30 points) in all six classes;

The **Triple Superior** award is for teams that achieve the Superior title in Regular, Jumpers, and Chances;

The **Superior Versatility** award is for teams that achieve the Superior title in all six classes. The above awards are offered at each of the three levels: Novice, Open, and Elite. A team that manages to earn the Triple Superior award at all *three* levels also earns the **Triple Triple Superior** award, while a team that earns the Superior Versatility award at all three levels also earns the **Triple Superior Versatility** award.

The **All Around** award is for teams that achieve the Superior title in all seven classes. The above awards are offered at each of the three levels: Novice, Open, and Elite. The dog must have completed the requirements of the Superior Versatility, plus a Superior Performance in the Hoopers class. Starting in 2010, the Gaters class will also be required for the All Around award.

NADAC offers a Championship awards, which are the NADAC Agility Trial Champion awards, or **NATCH**, for the Proficient category, and the **NADAC Medals** for the Skilled category. The NATCH and Medal acknowledge exemplary performance in Elite Regular, Jumpers, and Chances, while the Versatility NATCH and Versatility Medal adds performance in Elite Tunnelers, Weavers, and Touch N Go. These awards can each be earned at multiple levels, e.g.: NATCH-2, Versatility NATCH-3, Medal-4, Versatility Medal-5, and so on.

In addition to the NATCH and Medal awards, NADAC acknowledges outstanding performance at the Elite level by dogs that demonstrate exceptional speed as measured by their Run Index (RI) scores. If a dog earns 20 qualifying runs in Elite Regular, 10 qualifying runs in Elite Jumpers, and 10 qualifying runs of Chances, with each round earning an RI of 100 or more (except Chances, for which RI does not apply), the dog is awarded the **Platinum Speed Star**. If the dog also earns 10 qualifying runs each in Touch N Go, Tunnelers, and Weavers, each with an RI of 100 or more, they are awarded the **Platinum Versatility Speed Star**.

Dogs that demonstrate superior distance are acknowledged by NADAC with the **Silver Achievement Cup** and **Silver Versatility Achievement Cup**. The award requirements are that each of the qualifying runs must include a successfully completed 20 point Bonus (including the Chances rounds).

Dogs that demonstrate both speed and distance are acknowledged by NADAC with the **Purple Achievement Cup** and **Purple Versatility Achievement Cup**. The award requirements are identical to those of the Platinum Awards except that each of the qualifying runs must include a successfully completed 20 point Bonus (including the Chances rounds). The Purple Achievement Awards are the highest honor awarded in the NADAC awards program to acknowledge the dogs that demonstrate the highest level of skill that can be achieved.

NADAC recognizes that the Purple Versatility Achievement Cup is an extraordinarily difficult level of performance to accomplish; interim progress towards this goal is therefore acknowledged with the **MOD SQUAD** (Master Of Distance, Speed, QUality, Accuracy, and Directionals) Award, which is granted to any dog that achieves three 20 point bonus qualifying rounds in each of Regular, Jumpers, Chances, Touch N Go, Tunnelers, and Weavers. At least one of the three Bonus rounds must have a run index of 100+ for Regular, Jumpers, Tunnelers, Touch N Go, and Weavers.

Runs in both Categories—Proficient and Skilled—are combined for the Platinum, Silver and Purple awards.

Lifetime accomplishment is acknowledged by NADAC through **Lifetime Points Awards** that celebrate milestones beginning at 1,000 points and continuing at 2,500, 5,000, and every 2,500 points thereafter. This award is based on the combined points earned by the dog in all classes, levels, and divisions in each category (Proficient and Skilled).

These special awards and certificates described above must be requested by their recipients via the on-line request form at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com). Please allow NADAC at least 30 days after earning an award before requesting it, to allow time for your dogs' records to be properly processed.

Annual and lifetime achievements are also recognized by NADAC via the Top Ten awards, which are by tradition handed out at the annual NADAC Championships. These awards acknowledge the top dogs in NADAC scoring in various classes and at various jump heights for both the NADAC year (August 1 through July 31, typically) and lifetime. Recipients who are unable to attend the banquet or the Championships will have their awards mailed to them by NADAC; no need to go on-line to request them. The Top Ten awards are also described in the *NADAC Titles* file, which can be found at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com) or by following this link here.

All NADAC exhibitors can use the Title History Report and Check Points for Dog tools available at [www.nadac.com](http://www.nadac.com) to view the official record of their dogs' points and titling history.

# NADAC Scoring

## Handling Faults

In all agility classes, the handler shall direct their dog through the course without a collar or lead. No food, toys, balls or other device may be used within ten (10) feet of the entrance to the ring.

The handlers may not carry anything with them into the ring, which might be construed to be an aid to the performance of the dog (such as a whistle, fanny pack or leash around their waist). Dogs must enter and exit the ring on leash and under control. The leash and collar may be removed at the start line prior to beginning a run. The dog may not “play” with their leash at any time while in the ring or within ten feet of the ring.

Support wraps may be used. If a judge feels that the wraps are excessive or not applied in a manner to safely stay on the dog and not impede the dog's performance, the judge may ask for the wraps to be removed.

The handler is allowed to use verbal or visual commands to assist the dog throughout the course. All commands must be given in a sportsmanlike manner, or they shall be faulted. The judge shall assess the faults to be equivalent to the degree of the offense, from a twenty (20) fault penalty to elimination. Displays of anger, foul language, or excessive harshness shall always be faulted.

Any handler eliminated from the ring for poor sportsmanship shall be excused for the remainder of the trial and a written report shall be sent to the NADAC office.

Any handler which the judge feels has treated a dog in an inhumane manner shall be removed from the agility grounds and a report must be submitted to the NADAC office.

In all cases, at all times, regardless of the situation, the decisions of the judge of record or supervising judge shall be final.

Dogs shall be assessed five (5) faults for each of the following occurrences:

Dog repeatedly nipping at the handler, without making any contact with the handler during the run.

Dogs shall be eliminated/excused for the following occurrences during any class:

Any dog which demonstrates aggression towards a person or dog, whether inside the ring or outside the ring, must be excused from the agility trial. Aggression does not mean there must be actual physical contact. A dog that breaks away from its owner and chases another dog can be considered a demonstration of aggression. A dog that lunges at the end of a leash shall be cited for demonstrating aggression, as is the dog who charges any person, child or dog.

A dog will be eliminated and may be excused from the trial if the dog has already been faulted for **repeated** nipping and continues to nip or jump aggressively towards the handler. It will be considered aggression if the dog makes contact with the handler or clothing, shoes, etc

Fouling the course area before, during, or after their run. The course area is the entire ring area indicated by ring gates or ring ropes. The time for faulting the dog for fouling the ring includes the time the dog enters the ring before the run begins, until the dog leaves the ring area on leash after the run is completed.

Leaving the course area, while appearing to be inattentive to the handler. If the judge determines that the dog is outside the ring area, but is still trying to work for the handler, then they may give no faults.

Being out of control, as viewed by the judge. The judge may choose to eliminate a dog for being out of control at any time if the judge feels the dog is not trained to a level to perform the obstacles in a safe manner, thereby endangering the dog itself, the handler, or any other person or dog at the event.

Loss of control as displayed by a handler **repeatedly** and harshly downing a dog during their course run, or repeatedly recalling the dog back to the handler in an attempt to keep the dog in the ring, and under control.

**Training in the ring.** This could include re-doing an obstacle, or sequence of obstacles, which appear to be training that sequence or obstacle after it has been faulted. This could include a handler taking an excessive amount of time to perform an obstacle, or more than three attempts to perform an obstacle that the dog has refused repeatedly. This might also include a handler using aggressive body language or excessive harsh tones to get their dog to perform an obstacle. If the judge at any time feels that the handler is not trying to successfully complete a course, but is working a particular obstacle or type of obstacle, for the purpose of schooling a specific performance pattern on that obstacle (or type of obstacle), then the judge may eliminate that run for scoring purposes. The judge may allow the handler to continue their run and continue using sportsmanlike behavior while trying to improve their dog's performance on those obstacles. At no time shall a judge allow a handler to remain in the ring beyond the Standard Course time for that course while training in the ring.

NADAC allows, and encourages, training in the ring, but it shall never be a qualifying run. Any training in the ring must be done in a positive and sportsmanlike manner. Absolutely no harsh corrections or physical corrections shall be allowed.

Delay of start/start-line training. Once a handler has positioned their dog at the start line, and has started to leave the dog in an attempt to prepare for their run, they must continue to proceed forward in an effort to start their run. If the handler repeatedly stops in an attempt to urge the dog to maintain its staying position, they may be eliminated for training in the ring. If the handler takes any steps "back" to the dog, after they have left the dog, they shall be eliminated for training the start line. The handler may talk to the dog and use visual signals at all times after they leave their dog without incurring faults. The faults or elimination will occur if the handler returns to the dog, steps back before crossing the line and physically places the dog into a "position" or repeatedly stops proceeding forward because of an attempt to re-command the dog to stay at the start line. A judge might assess a five fault penalty if the handler spends an excessive amount of time before signaling to the dog to begin.

## Obstacle Faults

**Failure to Complete - 20 faults.** A dog will be assessed a 20 fault penalty if the dog skips, or in any way bypasses any obstacle without reaching a point of completion. The point of completion for the contact obstacles shall be when all four paws are on the descent side of the obstacle. This shall be the descent side of the A-frame and the descent ramp of the dog walk.

Any dog which commits to a contact obstacle by having all four paws on the obstacle, and then for any reason gets off the obstacle before reaching the point of completion, shall be assessed for a Failure to Complete. Any dog that has been assessed with a failure to complete penalty must go on to the next obstacle in the course sequence. Any attempt to retry a contact obstacle will be a cause for elimination. The judge shall say "Go on to the next obstacle" to the exhibitor if they feel the dog has committed a Failure to Complete and the handler should not retry the obstacle.

**Start Line:** A dog that crosses the start line before completing the first obstacle of the course shall have the time clock started. If electronic timing is being used, the ring crew should manually start the timer. No other faults shall be assessed (other than the time lost in re-attempting the first obstacle).

**Finish Line:** A dog that crosses the finish line before completing the final obstacle of the course shall be given 20 faults for failure to complete the last obstacle. This applies only if the last obstacle was the next one to be performed as part of the course; there are no faults if the dog crosses the finish line in the middle of the course.

**Weave poles:** The goal of the weave pole obstacle is for the dog to weave in one continuous motion in the direction indicated by the judge's course design. If a dog misses a weave pole, or if the dog must make a backward motion in order to enter the next correct opening between two poles, they must begin again by reentering the weave poles correctly at the beginning and weaving in one continuous direction to the end of the set of poles. Failure to do so will be faulted for a failure to perform (20 faults).

**Unsafe Performance of an Obstacle - 20 faults.** Any dog that performs an obstacle in any manner in which the judge feels the dog has endangered itself, the handler, or anyone else shall fault the dog with an unsafe performance of the obstacle. This fault can be assessed even if the dog has performed the obstacle correctly under the rest of the guidelines. A dog will be faulted for unsafe performance if they hit the weave poles so hard at the entry that the dog is "bounced" back. The dog may be faulted with this penalty if they are running so recklessly as to lose their balance and footing on a contact obstacle. The judge's decision is final as to whether an obstacle was performed in a safe manner.

**Running the Wrong Course - 10 faults.** A dog shall be faulted for running the wrong course when the dog commits itself to an obstacle that is out of sequence or is in the wrong direction as defined by the course design. A dog shall be determined to be committed to an obstacle when the dog's four (4) paws have touched, crossed over, under or through an obstacle that is out of sequence.

The dog shall be faulted for running the wrong course if the dog commits to an obstacle in the incorrect direction as determined by the course design. For example, if a dog were to enter the correct end of an open tunnel, come back out, re-enter and complete it correctly, then no faults would be assessed. If the dog were to enter the tunnel from the incorrect end with all 4 paws then 10 faults would be assessed for running the wrong course.

The dog may also incur a 10 fault off course penalty if the handler crosses over an obstacle, such as the handler jumping a dog walk ramp, jumping a jump, passing through a line of weave poles, or crossing over a tunnel.

Back weaving is another type of off course, and shall be faulted if the dog is trying to perform the weave poles and passes between poles, moving in the wrong direction, and makes at least three changes of direction before leaving the poles. The dog does not have to enter correctly or weave correctly to be faulted for back weaving.

**Missed Safety Zone - 10 faults.** A dog shall be assessed a 10 fault penalty for missing a safety zone. The following safety zones shall be judged for penalties:

- (1) The descent ramp of the A-frame
- (2) The descent ramp of the Dog Walk

A handler shall be faulted for interference if the judge believes that the handler is intentionally blocking the judge's view of a contact zone.

**Displaced Jump Pole, Bar, or Tire - 5 faults (Regular Agility and Jumpers Classes).**

A dog shall be scored with a 5 fault penalty if they displace the top jump pole, bar, on any hurdle obstacle, or bottom half of the tire jump. If a dog makes no attempt to jump and displaces the jump poles, bar or tire while passing under or through the jump in an unsafe manner, then the dog will be assessed an Unsafe Performance of an Obstacle, as described earlier.

### **Time Faults**

In the Regular Agility Class, Jumpers Class, Tunnelers Class, Weavers Class, Touch N Go Class, Hoopers class, and the Gaters class the dog shall be assessed time faults for each second or fraction of a second that the dog exceeds the Standard Course Time (SCT). The judge is solely responsible for establishing the SCT. The timekeeper shall always time each round to the 1/100ths of a second. For the Jumpers, Touch N Go, Tunnelers, Hoopers, Gaters, and Weavers classes, the letters TF in the time faults column is used to indicate that the dog had time faults, and thereby, a non-qualifying run. In the Regular Agility class, the time faults only have to be calculated IF the time faults are 5 or less AND the dog received no course faults. If the dog did receive course faults, then the scorekeepers only needs to indicate a TF for time faults.

## Standard Course Time

The officiating judge shall be responsible for establishing the Standard Course Time (SCT) for all classes. The judge is solely responsible for establishing the course distance and calculating the SCT according to the level of the class, the difficulty of the course, and any environmental conditions that may exist. The table below lists the maximum Yards Per Second (YPS) for the different levels and height groups for each class.

	Novice Level	Open Level	Elite Level
	Large dogs	Large dogs	Large dogs
Regular Agility YPS	2.75	3.25	3.75
Jumpers YPS	3.75	4.25	4.75
Touch N Go	3.25	3.75	4.25
Tunnelers	4.00	4.50	5.00
Weavers	3.00	3.50	4.00
Hoopers sm/md/lg	40.8/37.4/34	48/44/40	48/44/40
Gaters (TBD)			
Chances	No YPS factor or SCT (40 seconds is maximum course time)		

In the classes of Regular, Jumpers, Touch N Go, Tunnelers, and Weavers the following calculations shall determine medium dog, small dog, and veteran/junior handlers SCTs:

Medium dogs and Large Vet/JH dogs shall receive 10% more time than the large dogs for each level.

Small dogs and Medium Vet/JH dogs shall receive 20% more time than the large dogs for each level.

Small Vet/JH dogs shall receive 30% more time than the large dogs for each level.

## Maximum Course Time

A judge may establish a maximum course time for each class and level. Handlers exceeding the maximum course time will be invited to leave the ring.

The maximum course time for Chances is always 40 seconds.

## Guidelines for Agility Equipment

All obstacles used in NADAC-sanctioned competitions must meet NADAC specifications.

Obstacles must be constructed so as to be safe and reliable when used by the smallest or the largest of dogs expected to train or compete on that equipment. Equipment builders should always have safety as the primary concern when constructing equipment.

## Contact Obstacles

Contact obstacles should always provide a non-slip surface that provides good traction for the dogs without being so rough as to damage the dog's pads. Surfaces must be maintained on a regular basis so that dogs will not slip when performing these obstacles.

Most equipment builders have found that products such as Skid-Free, No-Skid, Skid-Tex, Deck-Tec or other such products will provide a better traction surface than using a large, coarse sand mixture. Most of these products, when mixed heavily with paint, will provide a non-slip surface that also works well when wet.

Rubber surfacing may be used, but MUST be first approved by NADAC.

All contact zones must have a clear line of demarcation 42" from the bottom of the ramp.

This may be done by painting the lower 42" with yellow paint or applying a minimum of a 1" white line at the 42" point on the contact ramp.

Slats are not allowed on the contact equipment.

The following table lists the heights of each of the contact obstacles, along with the widths and lengths of the ramps of each of those obstacles. Also listed is the length of the yellow contact zone for each obstacle.

	Ramp Length	Ramp Width	Height	Contact Zone
A-frame	8' or 9'	3' to 4'	4'8" for 8' ramps 5' for 9' ramps	42 inches
Dog Walk	11'6" to 12'	11.25" to 12" (12" recommended)	46" to 50"	42 inches

## Weave Poles

Weave poles shall be of rigid construction, no less than 20" from the center of one pole to the center of the next pole and no more than 24" from center to center.

Spring-based weave poles or non-rigid poles are not allowed in NADAC.

The base of the weave poles shall be no more than ¾" in height and no more than 2" in width.

There shall be no rough or protruding edges along the base of the weave poles, nor any bolts or nuts in an area which a dog may step on while weaving. Consideration should be taken for the many sizes of dogs which will be using the weave poles.

The weave poles shall be 41"-48" in height. The width of the poles shall be ¾"-1" in diameter.  
Open Tunnel

The diameter (opening/exit) of the open tunnel shall be approximately 24". The length shall be no less than 10' and no more than 20'. Tunnels should be of a 4" pitch. Tunnels not in good repair, those with holes, loose threads, or do not stay open with tunnel holders (i.e. the openings collapse frequently and easily) should not be used because they pose a safety hazard to the dogs.

## Tunnel Holders

NADAC recommends saddle bag type tunnel holders be used for all NADAC classes. Twenty pounds of sand or three gallons of water in each bag has proven to be sufficient to hold tunnels in place. Tunnel snuglers, "Omega" holders, or holders with flat plates and straps are acceptable.

Bungee cords or chains are not allowed. Metal “cradle” type tunnel holders are not allowed.

## **Displaceable/Spreadable Tire Jump**

The tire jump shall be comprised of a framework and a two part circular tire. The tire is to be suspended in such a way that if a dog, from the side, the bottom, or the top, hits the tire the bottom portion shall displace or spread apart. The top portion may or may not displace, but shall not present a hazard to the dog and will not cause the frame to turn over.

The material used for the tire shall be comprised of a plywood/foam sandwich or similar lightweight material so that the tire will retain its circular shape and still be very lightweight and easily displaceable. The tire should not be so heavy as to cause injury to a dog because of its weight.

The heights of the lower inside portion of the tire are adjustable so it can be suspended at the appropriate height (8/12/16/20”). **The inside diameter of the tire shall be 22” to 24”.**

The tire shall create the visual appearance of a complete circular tire. There is to be an upper framework over the top of the tire to provide support. The side supports shall only be wide enough to suspend the tire, but not so wide as to allow a dog to pass between the frame and the tire.

## **Non-Winged Jumps**

All jumps are to be 4’ to 5’ wide with uprights a minimum of 32” high and adjustable for the jump heights: 4”, 8”, 12”, 16”, and 20”.

Bars must be easily displaceable, and may be made of wood, plastic or PVC. There shall be a minimum diameter of 3/4” for jump bars. Jump supports may be constructed of any solid material.

## **Winged Jumps**

The same specifications as above apply, with the addition of side wings or other support standards. Wings should be free of sharp or hazardous edges and shall be a minimum of 6” to 12” higher than the highest jump height to be used.

Two bars per jump are required for all winged and non-winged jumps